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NAIROBI FOR A/S FRAZER
AF FOR DAS YAMAMOTO

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TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [SO](#) [SU](#) [DJ](#) [ER](#) [ET](#)
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: DEPUTY FM REACTS TO CONTACT GROUP
STATEMENT

Classified By: CHARGE VICKI HUDDLESTON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Summary. Deputy Foreign Minister Tekeda Alemu told Charge October 20 that the statement from the Somalia Contact Group was positive in that it confirmed the international community's support of the TFG, but it would have been better if the contact group had publicly supported a partial lifting of the arms embargo. The Charge urged continued restraint and recommended that Ethiopia let the issue of the arms embargo play out in the UN before taking any military action in Somalia. Tekeda said that Ethiopia would continue to monitor the CIC's activities and may be forced into action by the Courts. Charge told Tekeda that she was concerned about press reports leaking information from the independent commission's investigation and recommended that the GOE address the allegations quickly. At the conclusion of the meeting, Tekeda asked that the US supply money or equipment to Somaliland and Puntland. End Summary.

REACTION TO SOMALIA CONTACT GROUP STATEMENT

¶2. (C) Tekeda said the contact groups statement was a "strong" message that the international community supports the TFG. He expressed his disappointment, however, that the statement had not addressed the arms embargo. He said Ethiopia's next action will likely be dictated by the CIC response to the statement. Charge urged Ethiopia to continue its path of restraint and delay any military action until the UN takes up the matter of the arms embargo. Tekeda stressed that Ethiopia was still looking for a way to avoid conflict with Somalia, but warned that his country could not wait long for the international community to act.

INQUIRY COMMISSION

¶3. (C) Charge gave Tekeda a copy of the Department's press guidance which condemns the excessive use of force. She reminded Tekeda that she had urged the government to address this issue in order to assure the independence of the commission and to avoid leaked information from the independent commission's investigation of the electoral-related violence last year. Tekeda said that the report was "superficial" and not "fair" to the GOE. Tekeda also said that the USG press guidance was excessive in its condemnation of Ethiopia. He said he hoped the US was not "playing the gallery" and would "tone it down." Charge regretted that the GOE had not allowed an unadulterated version of the report to be released and recommended that the government tackle these allegations with seriousness and

conviction. Tekeda admitted that the GOE must deal with the situation, but noted that that the GOE has never been "adept at handling things with finesse."

SOMALILAND AND PUNTLAND

14. (C) Tekeda explained that Puntland and Somaliland have been requesting military and financial support from Ethiopia. Tekeda said that Ethiopia could not carry the burden alone and asked that the US consider offering money or equipment to Somaliland and Puntland. Charge recommended a direct approach by Foreign Minister of Somaliland to our Ambassador in Kenya who is responsible for Somaliland and to the UK. Charge also argued that by showing restraint to CIC could well over extend itself as it pushes into Puntland.

HUDDLESTON